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TITLE: HIV Prevention Community Planning: *Becoming Itr Own Bureaucracy?*

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ISSUE: HIV Prevention Community Planning has no checks and balances, thereby making it difficult to determine if it is successfully achieving the intended outcome. The process was established to garner input from populations directly impacted by HIV/AIDS in the identification of prevention priorities and potential interventions. Many planning models currently being utilized either fail to maintain the required parity, inclusion and representation (PIR) or present on paper an *illusion* of PIR. Planning group members who truly reflect the epidemic are too frequently intimidated by the technical and procedural jargon required to maintain interaction in the process; group membership is heavily weighted by organizations receiving funding from the CDC grantee, creating an inherent conflict of interest; subgrantee participants perceive they have no neutral process for providing objective criticism without jeopardizing their local funding; and planning budgets are inflated by the multiple layers of experts utilizing the process for personal training and development.

SETTING: States and territories receiving CDC HIV Prevention funding and HIV Prevention Community Planning entities.

PROJECT: To address this issue, The *Learning Center* proposes to develop and implement a three-tiered evaluation of the HIV Prevention Community Planning process. The *Learning Center* is a neutral agent (not funded for HIV prevention nor a community planning partner). The proposed evaluators are familiar with the planning process from both the grantee and planning participant perspectives. An HIV Prevention Community Planning Evaluation Survey will be disseminated to participants at the National HIV Prevention Conference. A facilitated dialogue session would also be conducted at the conference to identify perceived strengths and areas of weakness, and brainstorm suggestions for enhancing the planning process.

RESULTS: The aggregate conference participant survey data and the dialogue session data will be compiled into report format and made available to CDC and governmental and non-governmental community planning partners. This evaluation report will offer a foundation for identifying unmet needs, barriers, gaps, as well as potential solutions for the HIV Prevention Community Planning process.

LESSONS LEARNED: To date community planning has offered expanded input in the HIV prevention decision making process through broader inclusion of local sub grant recipients and experts. However, in absence of clear parameters, evaluation and accountability, HIV Prevention Community Planning is little more than a self-perpetuating bureauracracy.

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